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story & art
SAM KIETH

swell dialogue
BILL MESSNER-LOEBS

finishes
JIM SINCLAIR

lettering
MIKE HEISLER

color
STEVE OLIFF
and OLYOPTICS

logo
CHANCE WOLF

film output
KELL-O-GRAPHICS

OLYOPTICS:

Tracey Anderson, Robyn Roberson, Cathy Enis,
Patti Stratton Jordan, Kirk Mobert, Quinn Suplee,
William Zindel, Lea Rude, Stacy Cox, Marie St. Clair,
Chris Wolfe, and Moolis.

FOR IMAGE COMICS

Executive Director:
LARRY MARDER

Publisher:
TONY LOBITO

Art Director:
DOUG GRIFFITH

Production Manager:
TERESA CESPEDES

Distribution:
GERMAINE ZACHARIAH

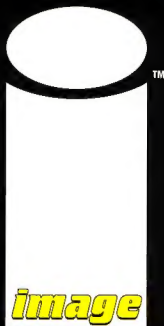
Traffic:
RONNA COULTER

Graphic Design:
KENNY FELIX

Asst. to Exec. Director:
KELLY VAN LANDINGHAM

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"You're a little princess inside, Sarah. You should let that part of you out sometimes. You should decorate the world!"

That's what my Grandma used to say, anyhow.

Huh. Right.



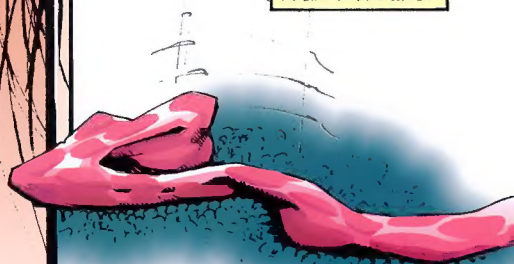
Last month my Grandma died. My Grandma went to a home. And I got all this stuff.



Even my mom, who usually says, "Be yourself, Sarah. Don't fall for the male media's idea of beauty blahblah blah..." got all misty about my using Grandma's stuff. Even bought me contacts.

Like irrational outbursts from her are a big surprise.

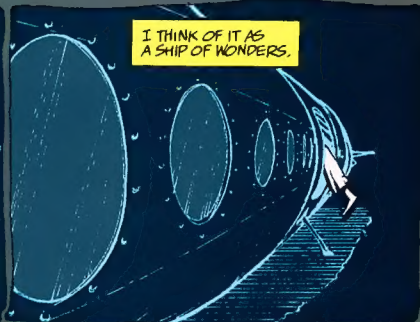
What nobody realizes here is that none of this stuff is gonna make ME beautiful. At all. Not like Julie.



THIS SHIP IS ALWAYS
IN MY DREAMS.



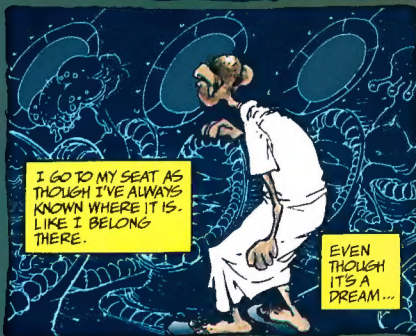
I THINK OF IT AS
A SHIP OF WONDERS.



THE INSIDE
FEELS STRANGE
BUT FRIENDLY.



I GO TO MY SEAT AS
THOUGH I'VE ALWAYS
KNOWN WHERE IT IS.
LIKE I BELONG
THERE.



EVEN
THOUGH
IT'S A
DREAM...

...IT
FEELS
REAL.



AND THEN
THE SHIP
STARTS UP.



AND THOUGH I'M
LEAVING... IT'S
LIKE GOING HOME.

BUT YOU'RE
NOT HOME, ARE
YOU, MR.
DELAMOR?

NO.

I KNOW THAT,
IN YOUR DREAMS,
YOU REACH THAT
SHIP. BUT OUT
HERE, YOU NEVER
WILL.

YOU'RE RIGHT,
I KNOW IT WON'T
HAPPEN.

BUT IF I
COULD JUST
GET A FEW
STEPS
CLOSER....

Uh-huh.
YOU LOST YOUR
WIFE NOT LONG
AGO, DIDN'T
YOU?

MARCELLA.
YES.

LIFE
CAN BE PRETTY
MISERABLE, CAN'T
IT, MR. DELAMOR?
EVERYONE WANTS
TO ESCAPE FROM
IT SOMETIMES. I'M
NO DIFFERENT.

OF COURSE,
MY FANTASY
REVOLVES AROUND
AL GORE, AN ARABIAN
STALLION AND A BULL
WHIP. BUT IT'S THE
SAME PRINCIPLE.

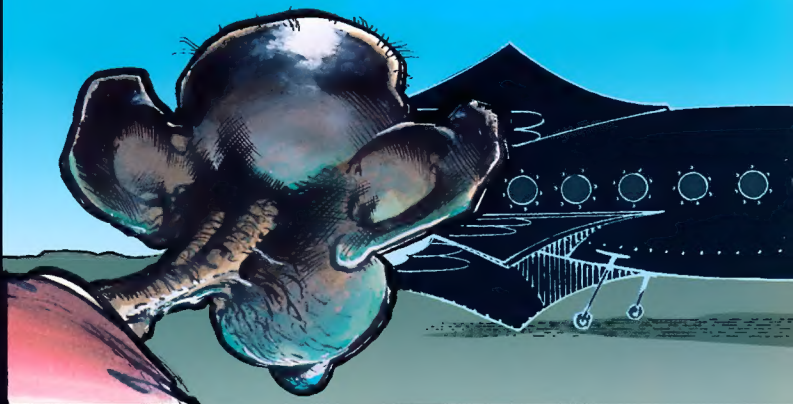


I THINK
YOU THINK IF
YOU'RE NUTS THAT
YOU WON'T HAVE
TO LEAVE. THAT
YOU'LL BE SAFE.

BUT YOU'RE
THE ONLY ONE
WHO CAN DECIDE
WHEN YOU HAVE
TO LEAVE.



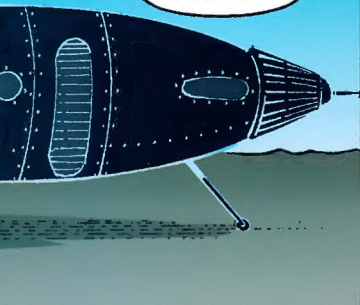
I'M SORRY,
YOU'RE RIGHT...
I KNOW, I
KNOW...





I'M NOT SAYING
YOU'RE LYING. I THINK
YOU HONESTLY GEE RE-
CYCLED 1950'S HORROR
FLICKS RUNNING THROUGH
YOUR HEAD AND SO YOU
THINK YOU STILL NEED
TO BE HERE. BUT YOU
DON'T. EVERYBODY
HAS A MOVIE IN
THEIR HEAD.

NO, I DON'T
THINK YOU DO,
OR YOU WOULDN'T
STILL BE CHASING
SPACESHIPS.



Still...

EVERYTHING WENT PRETTY WELL FOR A COUPLE OF WEEKS AFTER I STOLE THE CAR.

Then I hit somebody in a thunderstorm. And I was screaming, crying over this body...

I MET THESE TWO GUYS IN TAOS AND GAVE THEM SOMETHING TO TELL THEIR GRANDKIDS ABOUT. MAYBE NOT.

When I realized it WASN'T raining, and this wasn't a body. It was a Christmas tree.

And then some backpacker came up behind me, and offered help.

Somebody nice.

I don't think we reward nice people often enough, do you?



THIS MORNING,
I WOKE UP AND
EVERYTHING
CAME BACK.

THE IMPORTANT
THINGS IS TO
REACH THE SHIP.

EVERY DAY I TRY.
AND EVERY DAY I
GET A LITTLE
CLOSER.

THE CLOSER I
GET, THE LESS
IMPORTANT
EVERYTHING
ELSE SEEMS.

I GO PAST THE TWO
PEOPLE WHO ARGUE
ABOUT THE SHAPE OF
THE WALL TILES.

AND I STEP OVER
THE BOY WHO
SCREAMS IN
FRENCH IN HIS
SLEEP.

AND THEN
I'M OUT.

THE SHIP
IS 20 FEET
AWAY. IT
SEEMS SO
REAL...


SO WHERE
Y'WANNA EAT
AFTER THE
SHIFT?

I DUNNO.
MEX?

...SO
REAL.



I can see myself as my Grandma saw me.



But then I see me as me. What's the point of trying?

You ever notice eyelashes look like centipedes?

BAD GIRL

GOOD GIRL

VICTIM GIRL

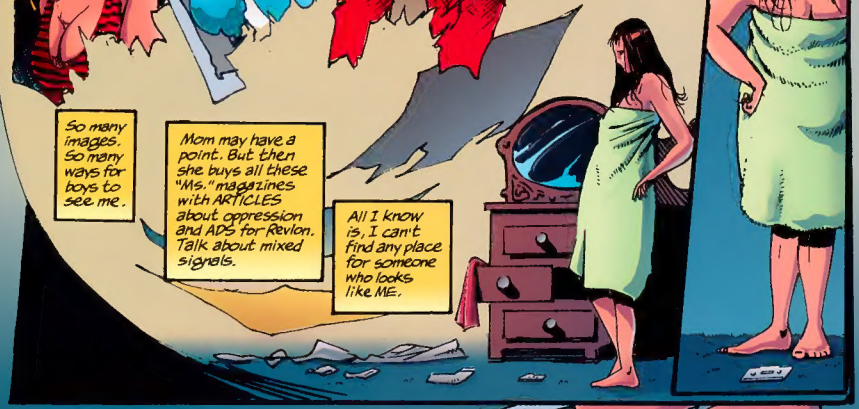


So many images. So many ways for boys to see me.

Mom may have a point. But then she buys all these "Ms." magazines with ARTICLES about oppression and ADS for Revlon. Talk about mixed signals.

All I know is, I can't find any place for someone who looks like ME.

What's this?



One of Gone's tapes. Must've fallen out before I tossed the box.



NO, MRS. JAMES, YOUR FATHER IS FINE. HE'S MAKING GREAT PROGRESS.



I JUST FEEL SO GRODY, Y'KNOW. I FEEL LIKE I SOLD HIM OUT.

I SPENT MY LIFE TRYING TO REBEL AGAINST MOM. NOW SHE'S GONE.



I JUST CAN'T LOOK AFTER HIM AND SARAH TOO.

PERFECTLY UNDERSTANDABLE. BUT REMEMBER, HE'S THE ONE WHO CHECKED HIMSELF IN. NOBODY BLAMES YOU.



Jill

"TO ESCAPE?"

WOULD YOU SAY THIS WAS A PATTERN... JILL?

WHAT PATTERN? THAT I DO A CRIME, THEN FIND A GUY? OR BALL A GUY, THEN COMMIT A CRIME?

THAT WAS THE PATTERN I WAS THINKING OF, YES.

I HADN'T NOTICED.

COME ON! WHAT ABOUT THE SHOPLIFTING SPREE IN TORONTO? AFTER EACH HEIST, YOU... UMM... MOUNTED A MOUNTIE, THEN STOLE HIS HORSE!

THAT WAS A COINCIDENCE.

IT'S THE ACT OF A YOUNG WOMAN DESPERATE TO PUNISH HERSELF FOR SOMETHING.

RIGHT YOU ARE SIGMUND. SEX AND MONEY, THE IDEAL PUNISHMENT!

MORE MEN! MORE CASH! PUNISH ME SOME MORE!

CUTE.

THE IMPORTANT THING
IS TO STUDY THE GUARDS'
SCHEDULES.

TONIGHT, THEY
ARE EATING
CHINESE.

HEY!

THIS IS IT! THIS MUST BE
WHERE THE SHIP CAME
FROM! IT'S A DOORWAY
TO MARS OR SOMETHING
AND IT'S BEEN HERE ALL
THE TIME! I WAS RIGHT!

THE DREAM
WAS TRUE! I'M
FINALLY FREE...

...OR AT
LEAST
MY HEAD
IS!

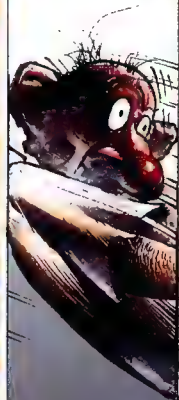
ANYTIME I
WANT, I CAN
ESCAPE!

I'LL SHOW 'EM!
I'LL FORCE MY WAY
THROUGH. I'LL
VANISH AND LEAVE
THIS PAINFUL,
ROTTEN WORLD!

I'LL FINALLY
BE FREE!


FREE OF...

Whoa! Whoa!



...REALITY.





I could be just the daughter he wants me to be...listen to him, talk like him... dress like him...BE like him!

I could just listen to his lies and be DONE with it.

Dear daddy. Dear mass-murderer, serial rapist daddy.



Or I could just RIP the tape right out...

God, he'd LOVE it that I spend so much time THINKING about him! Creep.



He's like the
ULTIMATE man...
he not only
decides how
women should
dress...

How they
should wear
their hair...

He decides
if they should
live or DIE!

God. It's like
living in the
world's STUPIDEST
after school
special.

"My dad--he kills
people. How I came
to UNDERSTAND
him!"

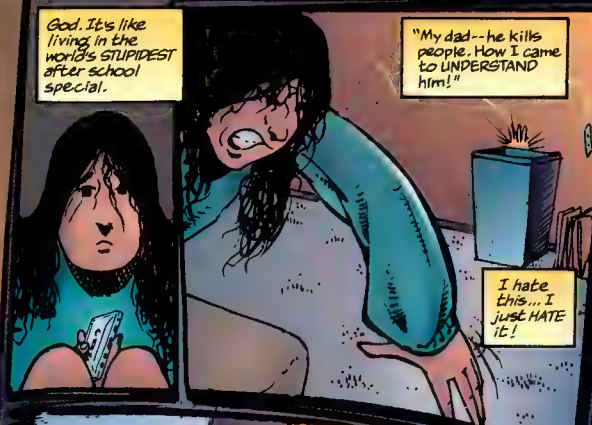
I hate
this... I
just HATE
it!

My mom thinks
I'm just a burden!
My best friend
leaves town.

The only one
who really
cares about
me... is HIM!

God. Don't
let me be
like him!

Don't let his
craziness be
in me!



AT LAST!
THE GUARDS
ARE GONE!

I'VE WAITED ALL DAY,
BUT I CAN FINALLY
SLIP THROUGH THAT
WINDOW INTO THE
OTHER WORLD...

IT'S
EXACTLY
14 PACES!

10-11-
12-13-
14-

15-
16...

NO!

1-2-3-
4-5-6-
7-8-9-



IT'S GONE!
THE DOORWAY
IS GONE!



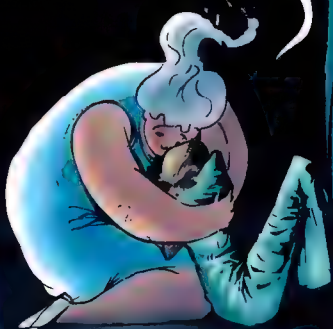
IT CAN'T
BE! I DIDN'T
MAKE IT UP!



I CHECKED
EVERY INCH.
NOW I'LL
NEVER GET
OUT OF HERE.



MARCELLA...
I MISS YOU. I
HURT INSIDE...



'COURSE
YOU DO.



I THOUGHT...
IF I LIVED IN HERE...
I WOULDN'T HAVE
TO FEEL... I COULD
JUST GO NUMB AND
FORGET. BUT ALL I
DO IS FEEL! I'M
TIRED OF THIS
CRAP!

'COURSE
YOU ARE.



THE
BUS IS
HERE.

I KNOW.
I HAD THE
ORDERLY PUT
YOUR BAGS
ON BOARD.

HE GAVE
YOU SOME
BURRITOS AND
EGG ROLLS FOR
THE TRIP.

GOOD.

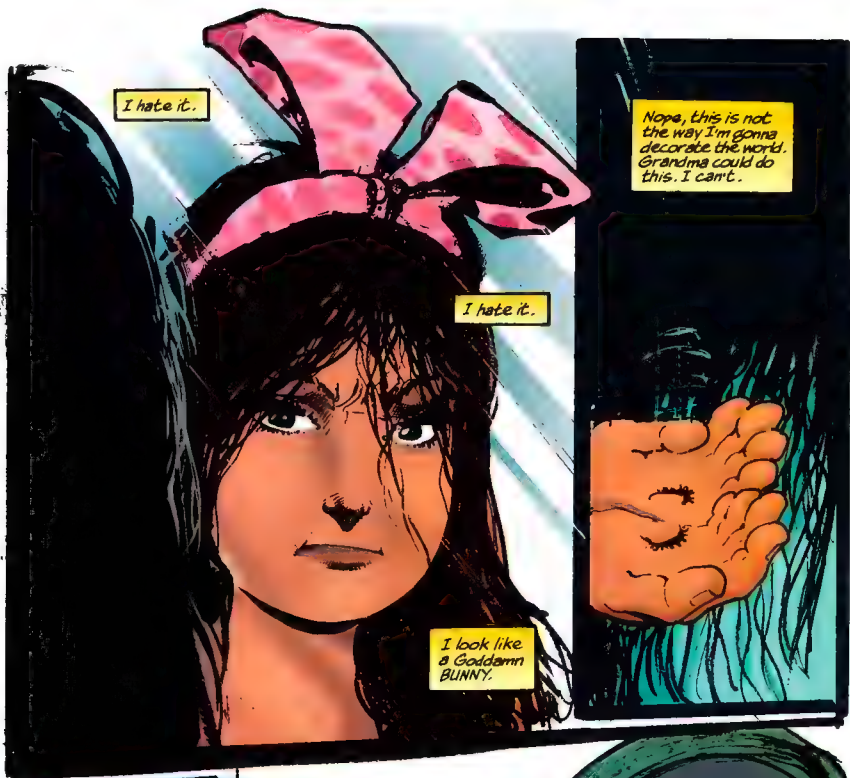
YOU'VE
BEEN A
FRIEND.

WRITE
ME WHEN
YOU GET TO
MARS.

MARCELLA
IS ON MARS.
I'M STAYING
HERE FOR A
WHILE.

EMMET?
MARCELLA WOULD
HAVE WANTED IT
THIS WAY.

NOT REALLY.
SHE WOULD HAVE
WANTED TO BE
ALIVE.



I hate it.

I hate it.

I look like
a Goddamn
BUNNY.

Nope, this is not
the way I'm gonna
decorate the world.
Grandma could do
this. I can't.



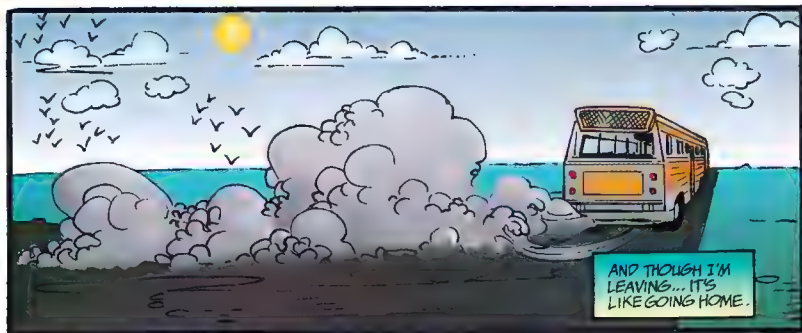
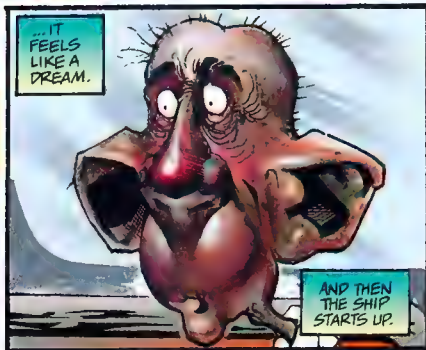
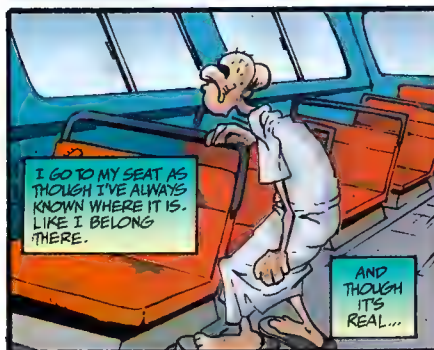
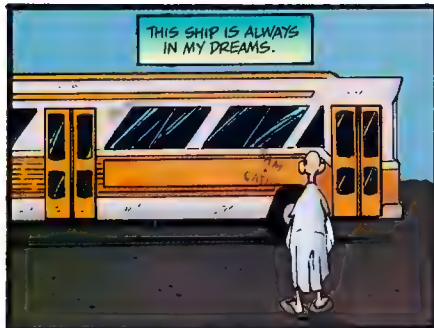
The contacts
hurt. The
eyelashes
tickle.



I feel like
a stranger.
A total
stranger.



★SIGH★ I guess
the world is stuck
with the same ol'
Sarah.





The last page of Issue #12 got left off, probably confusing folks who read our response to Jeff Tutt in *Maxx Traxx*. That missing page will be the first page of Issue #14. That was Jasper's hand that grew old and fell off on page one of Issue #12, by the way. It grew old because time goes faster in the outback. To find out how it came off, see next issue.

In Issue #11, I told everybody I was gonna take two months off, but nobody listened. Everybody thought we were cancelled. So **LISTEN UP:** for three issues (December, January, February) we'll be on time, then there will be **NO Maxx comic in March**, just the trade paperback of Issues #1-6. Then three more issues will come out (April, May, June). This is a bold prediction, but I think we can do it.

We were afraid the letter column might be getting boring, so we decided to start by talking about

SEX!!!

Dear Sam,

Why haven't we seen The Maxx have sex yet, I mean he is a rabbit. That reminds me, whatever happened to that blow-up doll from Issue #2. I just want to say that you're one sick

bastard, you need help.

Quite simply,
Don Jensen

Blow-up doll? And I'm a sick bastard? Gee—now I wish I had made it a blow-up doll...

Hey Sam,

If everything in Pangaea is a plant, how can I get some Julie seeds?

Erik Olson
Chino Hills, CA

Excuse me?

Sam Kieth,

I would guess that the stalking beast that Julie kills with a spear is her sexuality. Looks like sexuality to me. Mr. Gone is there, but he's very small.

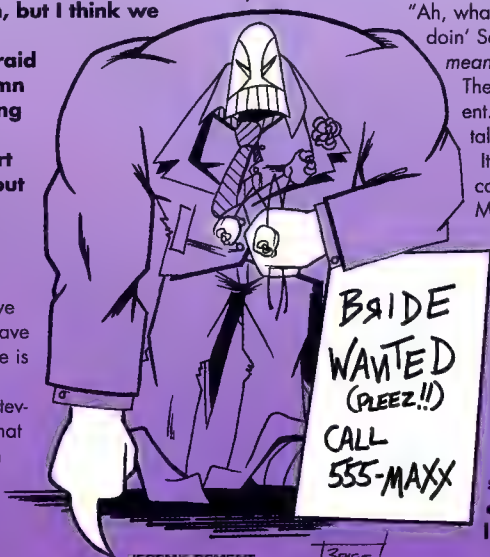
I like the way Maxx talks when he's small—at least there, running around with Pitt. Don't listen to all these people saying,

"Ah, what the hell are ya doin' Sam?" because it means something that The Maxx talks different. It means a mentality shift.

It's downright education you attempt, Mr. Kieth, and I think you are succeeding. Thanks for the great read. One of many readers,

Joe Cook
Sumas, WA

Wait'll you hear him talk small in the cartoon—not like The



JEREMY SEMENT
HAWKEYE, IA

30/01/94

Chipmunks, but like he inhaled helium. Everyone else thought it was too goofy, but it made me laugh, so we kept it.

Dear Sammy,

As pertains to Matthew Kelly's letter in Maxx Traxx of Issue #10, I have to say: Yes Red Lobster!!!!" One of the first comic books I ever read (an *Amazing Spiderman*—sorry) was in a Red Lobster, waiting for the food to arrive, lo those many years ago.

Your good buddy,
Tim Wegner
Des Plaines, IL

This Red Lobster thing is gaining almost mythical status. It's gonna have to be the backdrop for a Maxx-Julie-Sarah scene in a future issue.

Dear Mr. Kieth,

I'm willing to bet a signed Maxx #1 glow-in-the-dark cover that this letter won't be printed in your letter column. I'll allow 3 to 8 weeks for delivery.

Have a nice day,
Clayton Daffron
Battle Ground, WA

ERIC WILLIAMS
COLUMBUS, GA



OK, you lost. Now send me my cover.

Dear Mr. Sam,

Why does everybody say that The Maxx is a rabbi? I didn't realize that there was a Jewish superhero out there. Will candy from the Maxx Pezz dispenser taste like toast?

Christopher Grillo
Moore, OK

Dear Mr. Kieth,

Is Maxx a big purple rabbit? My brother Seth says he is! He says Maxx is and that's why in his first appearance his name is Max the Hare. Is this true? I mean about Maxx being a hare? Seth also says that's why he has big feet. I want to know! Please tell me.

Jay Coutts
Brookville, MD

If I tell you, you'll stop reading. If I don't tell you, it'll piss you off. What to do? Peter David once said that fans want something right up until the minute you give it to them. (I'm probably misquoting, and I know I'm gonna regret mentioning Peter David. . .) I think it's about time for a stream-of-consciousness letter:

HELLO KIETH HEAD!!,

Here I am sitting around waiting. Waiting for Maxx. waiting for #12, waiting for the cartoon, waiting for my local Stater Brothers to restock their Pez shelf. . .while we're on the subject of Pez, it's so weird Maxx has achieved a sort of cult-like following around here. What I mean is, I was serious about the Pez. it's that big. I don't know how they eat it all—it's almost always all gone before they get more. Well, enough butt-kissing. If you stop after issue 20 it'll ruin my life. You can't stop! You and



ROGER "BOUJEE" SMEETS
HOLLAND

Bill are geniuses!..(so I lied about the butt-kissing). Hey? why the bars at the top of the cover to issue 11? You can't see where it says "BONE" (I know it does cuz I got that cartoon promotional poster). Oh yeah! I almost forgot: WHY THE HELL DON'T YOU GO TO THE SAN DIEGO COMICON?!?!? You let all your fans down! Please please come this year! I love meeting the people who do the comics I love so much! Somebody at the image booth said you were shy. Is that true? Are you rich cause you do Maxx? By the way, can I still get Maxximum Sound? And if so where? (I already got me one o' them glow in the dark #1's). I really enjoyed issue-

MEOW MEOW MEOW
MEOW MEOW MEOW
MEOW MEOW MEOW
MEOW MEOW MEOW
MEOW MEOW MEOW
MEOW MEOW MEOW
MEOW MEOW MEOW
MEOW MEOW MEOW that's enough of that. Sorry R.A.S. (random act of stupidity). Well I forgot what I was going to say so I guess I should end this.

Fruitfully,
Ron (god of dumbness) Bauerle
8681 Avalon Ct.
Alta Loma, California 91701

Ewww! Okay, you mean to say that Mr. Gone's head is in Julie's apartment, alive, and listening to their every word? I love this comic. . .

Your reader,
Adam E.
Columbus, OH

I know I should have printed this letter sooner, right after the issue came out, but I couldn't resist using a letter that started with Ewww!

Dear Sam,

I think it's pretty cool how you turned the background of the cover of The Maxx #9 into one of the 3-D picture thingies that you can never see what the picture is. I won't

tell you guys what's in the picture though, because it's really cool and I don't want to ruin the surprise for you.

Chris Kane
Green Bay, WI

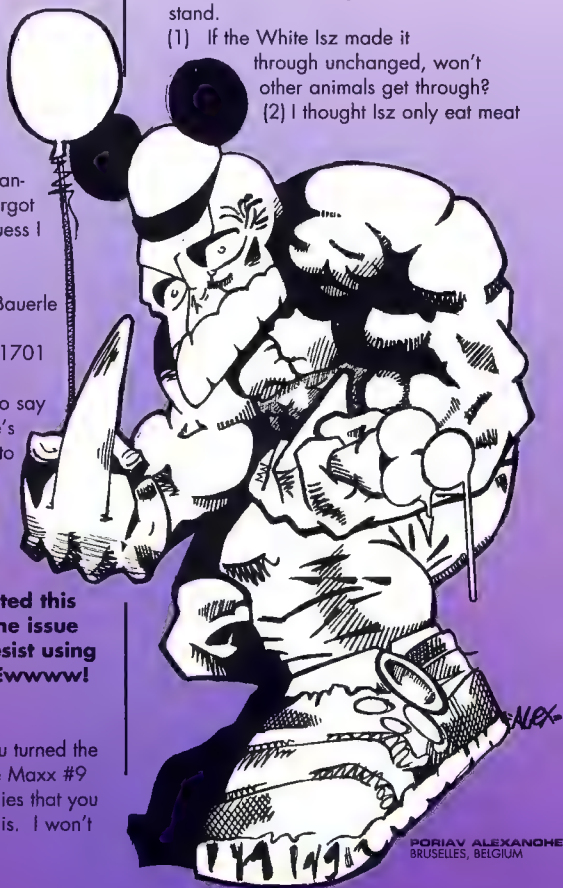
P.S. Please publish a trade paperback with The Maxx stories from Darker Image #1-4.

1-4? Ho ho—very funny. I've been staring at that cover for a long time and I don't see it, which is pathetic because I drew it. You've gotta give us a hint. The creators and all the fans wait with bad breath, I mean with baited breath.

Dear Sam,

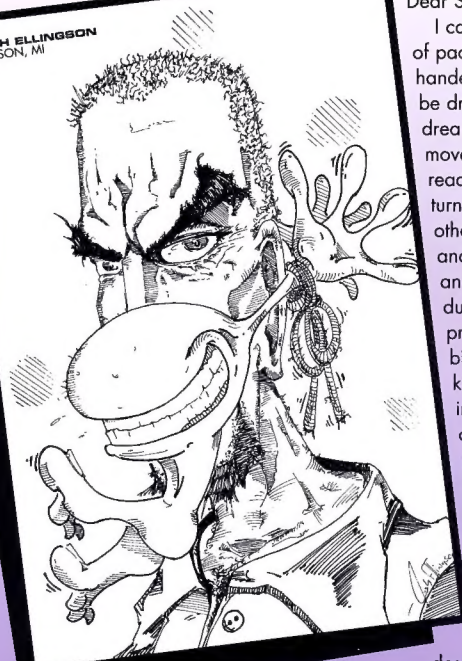
There are a few things I don't understand.

- (1) If the White Isz made it through unchanged, won't other animals get through?
- (2) I thought Isz only eat meat



PORIAV ALEXANDRE
BRUSSELES, BELGIUM

JOSH ELLINGSON
DAVISON, MI



when they come "to the real world," but they almost ate Maxx and Pitt in issue 7 and 8.

Sincerely,
David Briggs
Centereach, N.Y.

- (1) I hope so, or I won't have any ideas for future issues.
- (2) They drag them down to Mr. Gone's underground lair, where they still might tear them apart, or smother them.

Dear Mr. Isz,

You are the coolest character that has ever inhabited a comic book.

Your biggest fan,
Jim Strange
Royal Oak, MI

I would never presume to answer for an Is. Or two Isz.

Dear Sam,

I can't tell you what a nice change of pace it is not to have the story just handed to me in a comic book, but to be drawn into a topsy-turvy world of dreamlike subjectivity. It's a gutsy move on your part, since asking readers to think tends to be a major turn-off in the comics biz. On the other hand, some quality intelligent and oddball comics such as *Bone* and *Madman* have taken off lately due to publicity in the comics press and some good quotes from big-name comic people. I don't know how well *The Maxx* is selling, but I'm surprised that more creators haven't rallied to support it as they have with the aforementioned titles. Maybe you could put out a Maxx trade paperback with some big-name quotes on the back to generate publicity. I mean, surely Gaiman's got to like *The Maxx*. And *The Maxx* does

deserve the attention and praise given to books like *Bone* and *Madman*.

Sincerely,
David Farabee
Austin, TX

Appreciate your comments, but let's be fair: these books don't get the big push from distributors that Maxx does, and while the greedy part of me would like everybody to fall off their chairs talking about how great *The Maxx* is, the alternative part of me knows it's not fair to compare us.

Since you mentioned the trade paperback, it's due out in March, including Issues #1-6 and some other cool stuff, like sketchbook pages (write NOW if you don't want sketchbook pages!). By the way, I'm not gonna put the *Darker Image* story in the TPB because the characters seem so different from what they are now.

Dear Sam, Bill, and Jim,

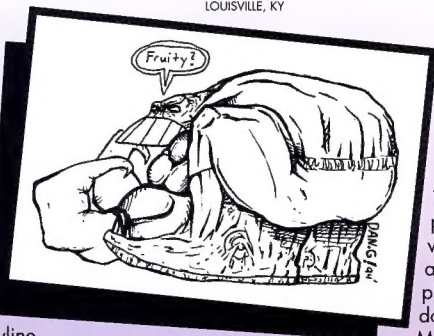
I just finished reading through the first nine issues of *The Maxx*, and things are falling into place. We know that Maxx has a bunny face while in the outback, we can suspect that Mr. Gone will get his head back on and return as a major player in the storyline, and we know that the real world, according to us, is all part of Julie's mind. Does this mean that none of us exist in reality? If this is the case, please let me know so I can stop living a life according to the imprisoning rules of society, not that I obey all of them anyway, but. . .

In Issues #7 and #8, The Maxx, as he appears in the outback, was in the real world fighting a regular sized Is with Pitt, only Maxx and Pitt were teeny tiny. The Maxx of the real world was in the outback with Julie (who were both giants in Pangaea) when a giant Pitt showed up. In the real world, Julie was in the bathroom, hollering at Maxx. How can all three of them exist simultaneously in two different planes of existence?

Confused about
my existence,
Tom Litchford
Grand Rapids, MI

**This can only be
solved at Red Lobster.**

Dear Sam,
The Maxx needs a dog. Not

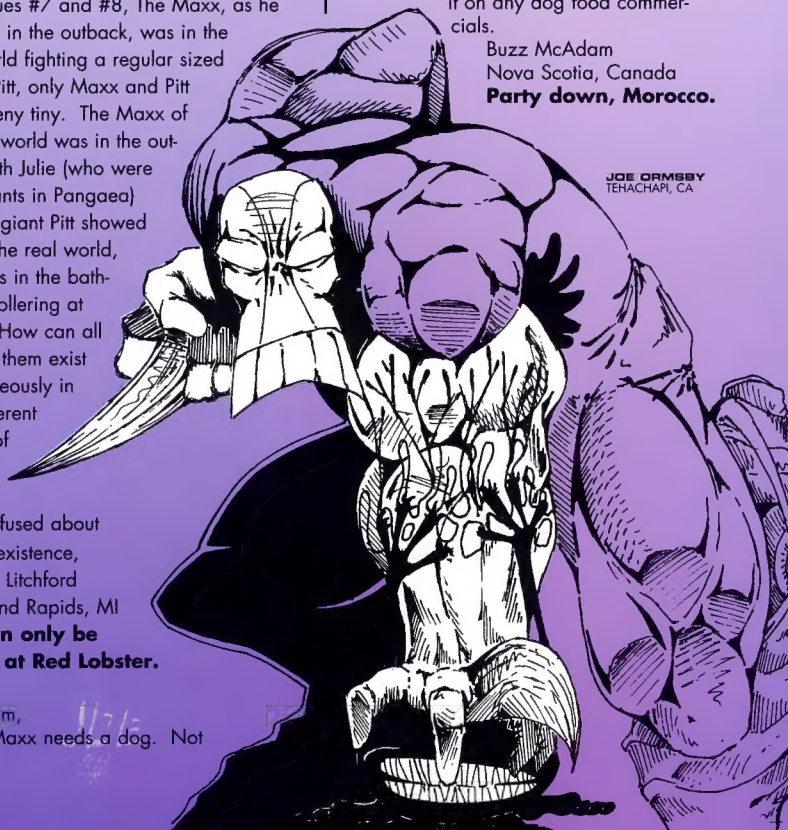


a stupid little
sissy dog or
a big mean
dog. Just an
average kind
of dog who
wants to be
The Maxx's
pal. People
with nice dogs
are nicer people. I have a
dog named
Morocco who's

just the type of dog that Maxx should have. He eats Pez and toast, just like The Maxx. Matter of fact, Morocco eats just about anything, except for metal, because it hurts his teeth. Please print this letter so that Morocco can have his five minutes of fame, because he's already six years old and I'm pretty sure he's not going to make it on any dog food commercials.

Buzz McAdam
Nova Scotia, Canada
Party down, Morocco.

JOE ORMSBY
TEHACHAPI, CA





ANDREA MINOSA
PADOVA, ITALY

JEAN-MICHEL VACHERON
FRANCE

